

Date:

The Ueno Royal Museum
1-2, Uenokoen, Taito-ku, Tokyo

Dear Mr. Seiichi Mizuno,

We are formally voicing our strong objection to your current exhibition, Tibet: Treasures from the Roof of the World. We believe that hosting an exhibit - authorized and promoted by the Chinese government, which has systematically suppressed Tibetan religion and culture for the past six decades - damages both your integrity as a museum and that of your sponsors. It also threatens the future prospects of the Tibetan people's desire for human rights and self-determination.

To undermine the global public support for the Tibetan freedom movement, the Chinese government has launched a full-fledged public relations campaign to distort the truth about Tibet. This is no secret; it is clearly articulated in Chinese government policy documents. By touring Tibetan culture around the world in partnership with cultural institutions like yours, the Chinese government hopes to create an image of itself as a benevolent and ultimately legitimate ruler of Tibet.

Any participation in this program, regardless of intent or motivation, is unacceptable and hurtful to the Tibetan cause and taints those associated with the exhibit. It will prove embarrassing for your museum to demonstrate such ignorance of Tibet's history and to be seen as collaborating with the Chinese government's propaganda campaign.

As someone who respects Tibetan culture and the Buddhist religion, we call on you to immediately take the following actions or to cancel the exhibition at your museum.

- 1) **We demand that your exhibit include a description of the Potala Palace, the seat of the Dalai Lamas for centuries, from which many of the artifacts were taken.**
- 2) **We demand that there be an explanation of the current 14th Dalai Lama's flight from the Palace in 1959 due to the Chinese occupation.**
- 3) **We demand that your exhibit explain the history of the conflict over Tibet and the documented abuses suffered by the Tibetan themselves.**

Even today the Tibetans have been conducting many peaceful protests inside Tibet calling for their human rights to be respected. The current situation inside Tibet is dire and thousands of Tibetans remain detained, tortured or missing since last year's nation-wide uprising. Some are sentenced to death with no trials. The international criticism of China's gross human rights abuses in Tibet and other Chinese-occupied territories is strong and pronounced.

One day, when Tibetans again control their own destiny, people will be able to view the precious pieces included in the exhibit Tibet: Treasures from the Roof of the World. Until that time, any cooperation with the Chinese government only serves Beijing's interests, and we strongly believe, does more harm than good.

We look forward to your prompt reply.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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